


## C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Robert L. Masterson, Zoning Administrator for Knox County, Illinois, do hereby certify that I am responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Knox County Zoning Resolution, Knox County Subdivision Control Resolution and the Knox County Floodplain Ordinance (Ordinance 95-1) and for keeping and maintaining all records and documents appertaining thereto, including minutes and proceedings of the Knox County Zoning Board of Appeals, and copies of all permits issued as authorized by said Resolutions and Ordinance, and further, I certify that the attached is a true and correct copy/reproduction of the:

"REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER UPON THE PROPOSED 'OAK RUN' RESIDENTIAL - RECREATION DEVELOPMENT, KNOX COUNTY, ILLINOIS TO THE SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE OF THE KNOX COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION" ca. 1970,

filed with and of record and maintained in my office.

  
Robert L. Masterson, Knox County Zoning Administrator

Date of Certification: March 14, 2001

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
UPON THE PROPOSED "OAK RUN" RESIDENTIAL - RECREATION  
DEVELOPMENT, KNOX COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
TO THE SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE OF THE KNOX COUNTY  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

INTRODUCTION:

The American Central Corporation, Lansing, Michigan, has acquired interest in approximately 4000 acres of land located in Copley and Persifer townships in Knox County, Illinois. The Corporation proposed to develop this land as a Residential-Recreation, resort or vacation home, subdivision. To this end, the developers propose to provide the following amenities to induce the sale of lots and establish the character of the area:

1. A 580± acre lake including beaches and a boat launching area;
2. Private club house and swimming pool for use by future lot owners of the development;
3. Golf course which will be public until turned over to the proposed "Lot owners Association"; and
4. A camper area for use by lot owners.

The stated intent of the American Central Corporation is to plat and market lots over a five to six year period. ✓

This report, and the recommendations, is concerned not primarily with the technical requirements of the Knox County Zoning and Subdivision regulations, which the developer can meet, and has 80% met on the first plat, but with the more important planning aspects of the proposed development and the long-range implications which a potential five-thousand-lot community will have upon the residents and lot owners within the development and upon the county and other established systems within the county, i.e., school districts, fire districts, road districts, townships, and other jurisdictions which, sooner or later, are responsible for the subdivided land.

The Knox County Board of Supervisors has granted a change of zoning classification on the entire 4000-acre tract from a "C" Conservation district to an "R" Rural Residence district. This change of zoning allows the developer to submit plans for a residential community as per requirements of the "R" zoning district and in conformance with provisions of the county's subdivision regulations. The Regional Planning Commission is charged with reviewing said plans and assuring that needed improvements and essential services are provided to serve the potential population.

Comprehensive Planning \*

The development of a 5000-lot, plus or minus, subdivision constitutes a community, regardless of the type of subdivision intended by the developers, be it a residential community complete

with industry, commerce, and other community features, a bedroom community, resort or vacation home community, retirement community or mobile home community, and should provide for the needs of people ultimately living in the development or purchasing property. A land development, such as proposed by the American Central Corporation, has one of two ways to go when considering the need for a "Total living environment" -- 1. Select a site taking advantage of already established public and semi-public facilities such as churches, schools, hospitals, theatres, sewer and water systems, solid waste disposal, parks and playgrounds, police and fire protection, power (Electric & gas), and private facilities meeting other service needs of the potential future population whether permanent or seasonal, such as convenience shopping, medical care and other temporal needs, or 2. When site selection is determined by the character of the area and intent of the developer, such as the case of the "Oak Run" development, plan and provide for the community needs within, or conveniently close or adjacent to, the development.

The subdivider of land does much more than sell real estate. The result of his activities leaves an indelible impression upon the community-at-large. "What the subdivider of land does and how he does it are of extreme importance to the general public as well as the individual."(1)

The time to be concerned with the proper planning and design of a "subdivision," especially one of the magnitude of "Oak Run" with its community implications, is before development occurs, not after the lots have been sold and the developer has left.

#### "Oak Run" planning

American Central Corporation has submitted the preliminary subdivision plans for the first two, out of nine proposed, subdivisions in the "Oak Run" development -- "Forest Ridge" and "Westwood" subdivisions. These two subdivisions have a total of 1149 lots, and a beach and park area of approximately 15 acres. Subdivision number one, "Forest Ridge," is proposed to be served by a central sewer and water system and sewage treatment plant, being the responsibility of the "Spoon Valley Lake Sanitary District," set up according to state statute. Financing of these systems will be revenue bond issue -- American Central Corporation purchasing these bonds. The second subdivision, "Westwood", is proposed to be served, temporarily, by individual on-site sewer and water systems with the central systems being extended at a later date when twenty-five percent build-up has occurred. This formula would apply likewise to the successive seven subdivisions.

The developer has also presented to the Planning Commission a subdivision, sketch plan for the entire proposed 5000 lots, plus or minus, which includes allocation of space for two beaches, a boat launching area, club house, golf course and camping area.

(1) The Community Builders Handbook, Anniversary Addition, Urban Land Institute, page 75

The plans, as submitted, are strictly subdivision layouts and little or no attention has been given to the basic community needs which a development of this magnitude deserves and demands, and which, if the project is successful, will surely manifest themselves, admittedly, after the developer has left.

### Review, Analysis and Recommendations

In reviewing the proposed "Oak Run" development in general, and the first two subdivisions in particular, total planning concepts and community development, rather than technical subdivision requirements, are the major concerns. These concerns are broken down into public facilities and services and private provision of service needs for a potential community of 5000 urban-size, building lots. Recommendations are made with concern for minimum basic community needs and facilities and not the incidental amenities provided by the developer to induce the sale of lots. However, amenities provided by the developer, since they affect the development, are touched upon.

Following are the minimum concerns which both the developer, American Central Corporation, and the Planning Commission should consider in providing for a total living environment in the "Oak Run" project:

### Community Facilities

#### Sewer and Water

In 1969, the Knox County Regional Planning Commission, in the Comprehensive Sewer and Water Plan, recommended, among other things, that "developed and developing areas of the county, such as Lake Bracken, Lake Storey, Lake Rice and small unincorporated towns and villages should be served with both centralized sewer and water systems instead of individual septic tanks and wells. concentrated residential lake front development should be discouraged unless adequately served with efficient sewer and water systems." This Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in July of 1969. This recommendation establishes the county's concern with regard to sewer and water provisions in developing areas and provides a policy for the plan commission to follow in reviewing and approving projects such as "Oak Run."

American Central Corporation was instrumental in the formation of a sanitary district (Spoon Valley Lake Sanitary District) to provide a central sewage system and treatment plant for "Oak Run" and to maintain and operate said system. This district provides the means for meeting sanitary sewage needs and relieving the developer of that responsibility, and it places the Planning Commission, in one respect, in the unfortunate position of having to deal with a public body which it has no direct jurisdiction over.

✓ American Central Corporation proposes, through the Spoon Valley Lake Sanitary District, to provide both a central sewer and water system for the first subdivision (Forest Ridge) of 572 lots and has requested a variation to allow a reduction in the required lot sizes, in subsequent subdivisions, to less than one acre without central sewer or water. They propose, through an agreement by the sanitary district, dated July 27, 1971, that the sanitary sewers and water system be extended at a later date, based on a formula recommended by the district's engineers, Rezek, Henry, Meisenheimer and Gende, Incorporated, which, in short, would require the sanitary district to extend sewer and water when 25% of lots, in any subdivision, are built-up. In the interim, on-site sewer and water facilities are requested. The on-site sewer and water system would be an aerobic system -- basically a septic-type system with air introduced into the system, by means of a compressor, and an agitator to reduce size of solids. The developers contend they are asking for an extension of time for provision of public sewer and water, rather than a variation in lot sizes. The developer further proposes to encourage sale and development of lots in these subdivisions having sewer and water.

The American Central Corporation offered the following reasons for its request:

1. The sewer system will not function without sufficient users, requiring periodic flushing of the system;
2. Financing the sewer without users, or owners, would be economically unfeasible;
3. Provision of sewer and water is the responsibility of the sanitary district and they feel the district has given adequate assurances that the systems will be in when needed -- at the expense of lot owners and financed by special assessment;
4. Real estate commissions would have to be paid on the increased cost of the lot occasioned by installation of sewer and water systems;
5. Since sewer and water improvements will be paid for by lot owners, through special assessment, sewer and water should not go in until development warrants it;
6. The developer, American Central Corporation, cannot afford to install the total sewer and water systems throughout the "Oak Run" project; and
7. The developer contends that the Knox County Zoning Board of Appeals, in recommending the change of zoning classification from a "C" Conservation to an "R" Rural Residence district, at the "Oak Run" project, implied approval of lot size reductions since the proposed 5000 lots on less than 4000 acres, after deducting streets, golf course, lake, and other amenities, would have to be less than one acre apiece. The Board of

Appeals recommendation was made after review of the "Environmental Engineering study for Oak Run, Knox County, Illinois" which was prepared for, and as a recommendation to, American Central Corporation.

A general study of the site conditions at "Oak Run" (Round Bottom) and other factors relative to on-site sewer and water systems reveals that;

1. The topography and sub-soil conditions are not conducive to septic or seepage type systems. The topography is characterized by slopes of from 7 to 30 percent while subsoils, at drainage field depths, are generally of a tight, or stiff, clay, as determined by soil borings taken at the dam site by Associated Engineers, Incorporated for American Central Corporation. Lacking soil borings for the remainder of the Round Bottom area, it is assumed that the same general soil conditions prevail throughout the area.

2. No test borings have been submitted by the developers to determine seepage rates or types of subsoils;

3. Investigation of the efficiency and characteristics of aerobic, on-site sewage systems reveals the following:

a) The units cease to function in case of power failure and could be difficult to reactivate following extended power shutdown. (This is important due to proposed second-home nature of the "Oak Run" development);

b) The aeration process of these units produces solids that would be expected to seal off subsurface seepage systems much quicker than would wastes from the anerobic septic tank process;

c) The need for continuous power, the cost of power and mechanical maintenance are of great importance;

d) Land not suitable for subsurface disposal septic tank wastes would not be suitable for seepage disposal wastes from the household aerobic systems

These points were brought out as a result of a request of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and substantiated by two other sources -- Stanley Consultants, Incorporated of Muscatine, Iowa and McClure-Leckman Engineering of East Moline, Illinois.

Other questions requiring answers with regard to future sewer and water facilities are:

1. Future financial capability of the sanitary district to install adequate sewage facilities. (25% build-up would still require assessments against all properties within a subdivision and it is questionable that revenue or assessments bonds would

be highly saleable with a "second-home" type development)

2. Double expense would be incurred by property owners who build early without a central sewer system.

3. Installation of sewer and water, being the responsibility of the sanitary district, would not be covered under special assessments levied by the Lot Owners Association. Assessments would have to be levied by the District.

4. If the basic formula for extension of public sewer is approved by the county, (extension upon 25% build-up) consideration should be given to the contingency of a developed area, less than 25% build-up, creating sanitary sewage problems; and

5. A lot size variation, or extension of time, would set a precedent affecting other land developments in the county.

Recommendations: It is recommended;

1. That the "Oak Run" development comply with the regulations of both the Knox County subdivision control Resolution and zoning Resolution with regard to lot sizes without public sewer;

2. that adequate soil borings and seepage tests be conducted to determine capacity of the soil to dispose of subsurface effluent discharge, if seepage-type, on-site sewage systems are to be used.

3. that lake front lots in particular should be at least 20,000 square feet in size if a Central water system is provided and individual, on-site sewage systems are to be used, and

4. that a Central water system be installed to serve all proposed lots in the "Oak Run" development both to protect the health of residents and provide for adequate fire protection.

Other Community Facilities:

✓ The developer of "Oak Run", American Central Corporation, should consider its project on a community basis. In reviewing plans for "Oak Run", it is assumed that at some future date, if the proposed 5000 lots are sold and the project is successful and attractive, people will be living there, either permanently or seasonally, and certain community facilities will be needed and certain safeguards must be made to secure the best total living environment possible. Provision of community facilities would also help to encourage development of the area. Community needs generated by a potential 5000 lots and anywhere up to 12,000 people should be the concern of the developer in the initial planning stages, and the county should not relieve the developer of the responsibility of planning for community needs even though such needs may not immediately manifest themselves.

standards used in considering community needs and facilities is based on a potential population of 12000 persons, plus or minus, and 5000 lots.

### Fire Protection

Fire protection is a major consideration regardless of the type of community intended. Private improvements (home & property) on the individual lots are entitled to adequate protection.

The "Oak Run" development is presently served by three volunteer fire departments -- Knoxville, Victoria-Copley and Williamsfield. The Knoxville and Williamsfield districts both have facilities and equipment in the "Oak Run" area -- at Appleton and Dahinda respectively. In a meeting with representatives of the three districts, the following concerns and suggestions were brought out;

1. An adequate water system, preferably a central system with elevated storage, is needed. Short of this, sufficient all-weather access should be provided to the lake for pumping equipment;
2. The meandering road network would compound the problem of trying to reach all areas of the development;
3. Victoria-Copley fire district has had unfortunate experience with other recreational areas in that they failed to respond to some fires for lack of an alarm being sent and, in other instances, being unable to reach a fire because the development was gated and locked;
4. Life saving and resuscitation equipment should be readily available in a lake-recreational development such as proposed at "Oak Run;"
5. Better service could be rendered to the "Oak Run" development if it formed its own fire district or at least provided fire fighting facilities in the development;
6. The "Oak Run" (Round Bottom) area is prone to bush fires and the fire districts have had fires in the area almost annually.

It was the consensus of the three fire districts that the "Oak Run" development should provide, in their development, suitable areas for fire fighting facilities and it was suggested that a site be provided on both the east and west sides of the proposed lake and that a single fire district be established when warranted.

### Police Protection:

Discussions with the sheriff indicate that police protection would present a problem upon substantial development at "OakRun" under the present set-up of the sheriffs department.



It is hoped, by the sheriff, that additional personnel will be forthcoming to service this area. The sheriff felt that the area could be better served if it were to incorporate at some future date when development warranted it.

### Schools

A potential 12000-person community could expect to generate sufficient school-age population to justify an elementary school. Superintendents of the three school districts serving "Oak Run" Knoxville, Williamsfield, and R.O.V.A., feel they could handle the load from this development, at least they expressed no concern to the contrary.

It is recommended that a three-to-five acre site be reserved, in conjunction with a neighborhood park, for future school and that this site be located away from major streets and any planned commercial center. It is suggested that this site be planned for the east side of the proposed lake and centrally located.

### Parks, Playgrounds and Useable Open Space

In addition to the beaches, boat launching area, club house and golf course proposed by the developer, "Oak Run" will need parks and playgrounds. Parks should be provided to accommodate all age groups and a wide range of recreational interests. Each subdivision in the "Oak Run" development should be considered as a neighborhood and contain adequate park and open space. Each subdivision should contain a neighborhood park of 3 to 5 acres and located centrally. These parks should be situated so as to serve an area of one-quarter mile radius. They should be relatively flat but well drained and able to accommodate various field activities, play equipment and tot lot, and, if possible, tied in with other open space to provide access, both visual and physical, to the proposed lake.

### Community Park

In addition to neighborhood parks and playgrounds, a community park, for use of the entire development, is recommended. Such a park, containing between 15 and 40 acres should be located adjacent to a major access road and centrally located within the "Oak Run" project.

### Open Space

Open space, aside from the formal, recreation amenities proposed by the developer, are limited to areas reserved primarily for drainage purposes. These open spaces serve little other function than possibly scenic easements. It is suggested that some of the open spaces could be integrated with the recommended parks and playgrounds.

### Proposed Amenities

The proposed beaches, boat launching area, club house and golf course, are considered adequate to accommodate the intended 5000, plus or minus, lots in "Oak Run."

The two planned beach areas will provide for picnicking and other park facilities and could meet the need of a neighborhood park in the subdivisions they are located in.

However, the beaches and boat launching areas are accessible through residential areas on residentially designed streets. These streets should be enlarged to accommodate the traffic which will be using these community facilities. Two 12-foot lanes, one in each direction, is recommended.

### Community Administrative Center

Space should be provided for an administrative center for the Lot Owners' Association. It is unreasonable to assume that the club facilities could serve both functions.

The Administrative center could include space for police, fire and sanitary district offices and could be located within the recommended commercial area.

### Commercial Facilities

A residential community of 5000 lots and potential population of 12,000 persons should have convenience-item shopping facilities within five minutes driving distance, such facilities should provide for the day-to-day living needs of the immediate neighborhood. A community the size of "Oak Run" should plan for an area capable of accommodating a "neighborhood shopping center" of up to 100,000 square feet of floor space and adequate parking, or from 5 to 10 acres of land. The shopping center should be located on an arterial street or junction of arterial streets.

The commercial center could be located either in or outside the development, but should be part of the development plans. It is preferred that the center be located within the development to offer the developers the control over location and type of business locating in the area and to provide compatibility with the rest of the project. Inclusion of the commercial center within, or adjacent to, the project would reduce, considerably, the chances of indiscriminate rezoning and proliferation of incompatible commercial uses.

It has been contended by the developer that existing commercial facilities, namely in Galesburg and Mahinda, should be protected from competition from business locating at the "Oak Run" project. That existing businesses in these communities should be patronized by people living at "Oak Run." However, to capture the potential market at "Oak Run," businesses in these communities will, most likely, attempt to locate facilities in proximity to the development to discourage business from going to other areas such as Peoria, the Quad Cities, or even other communities closer

to "Oak Run". Interest has already been expressed, by business- in Galesburg, for locating facilities at "Oak Run." Convenience and service to the potential population at "Oak Run" is the primary factor.

### Roads

Upon completion of the "Oak Run" development, the two townships, Persifer and Copley, will be responsible for the maintenance of approximately 50 miles of additional roads. These roads will be constructed to present county requirements -- sixty (60) feet of right-of-way- (for streets without curb and gutter) for residential streets, and eighty feet for arterial, or circumferential, streets with the center twenty (20) feet being improved with a bituminous surface treatment, sub-class A-3, consisting of one (1) prime coat; two (2) cover coats and one (1) seal coat, over an eight (8) inch compacted crushed stone base twenty-two (22) feet wide.

Performance bonds will be submitted by the developer to cover construction of roads, since the developer proposes to record final plats prior to completing improvements. Final approval and acceptance of the roads rests with the respective township road commissioners.

Concern has been expressed by the road commissioners over the additional load they will have in maintaining these roads. Inadequate funds, personnel and accessibility to the internal road system appear to be the primary concerns. Although no simple solution to shortage of funds and personnel seems possible, accessibility could be simplified if a site were provided at "Oak Run" for storage of maintenance equipment, or if the project eventually forms its own road maintenance district through incorporation.

It is recommended that a site, possibly connected with the recommended administrative center, be planned for future road maintenance facilities.

### Ecology and Conservation

To insure the maximum preservation of the natural environment and secure the best possible living conditions in the "Oak Run" area, it is essential that provisions be made, both by restrictive covenant (deed restrictions) and establishment of conditions in the subdivision review and approval process, to cover the following elements:

1. Retention and protection of wooded areas by restricting removal of trees, except those absolutely necessary for the installation of required improvements and those essential to provide adequate buildable area on individual lots. Provide in restrictive covenants (deed restrictions);

2. Excavation and alteration of topography should be restricted to areas essential to the installation of streets, buildings and public (community) facilities;

3. Reseeding of exposed areas to prevent, or minimize soil erosion and siltation of the proposed lake;
4. Prevention of lake contamination from slurry area (North of "Oak Run") by diversion of run-off or through nutualization;
5. Limit power of motor propelled water crafts of the lake to reduce, or prevent, erosion of shoreline (Home Owners Association Rules and Regulations governing use of common properties);
6. Prohibit disposition of solid wastes within the project ("Oak Run") area -- could be controlled through county zoning;
7. Installation of public utilities (gas, electric, telephone) underground except where physically impossible;
8. Elimination, or drainage, of small ponding areas to eliminate and prevent breeding of mosquitos.

Summary:

In summary, the following minimum recommendations are made to insure the desirability and livability of the "Oak Run" development;

General:

1. Consider the "Oak Run" project as a community, providing for the service needs of the potential population;
2. Require sketch plan of total project area incorporating all recommended community facilities and submit to Board of Supervisors prior to approval of preliminary subdivision plats;
3. Review individual subdivisions in the context of the total project plan; and
4. Require compliance with all county and state regulations covering subdivision and development of land.

Community Facilities

1. Require for fire, police and administrative center. Two sites are recommended for fire fighting and emergency equipment -- one on each side (east and west) of the proposed lake.
2. Require one centrally located site of at least three acres for future school. Site should be located away from major streets and commercial area and could be tied in with the recommended community park;
3. Require neighborhood parks, in addition to beaches and boat launching areas, in each subdivision. (3 to 5 acres each);

4. Require a sites(2), centrally located, for community parks of from 15 to 40 acres.
5. Require a conveniently located site for use as road maintenance facility
6. Require separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic by means of trails on walkways tied into the parks and open space;
7. Assign lot designations to all common parcels or lots, such as beaches, parks, etc;
8. Consider location of sites for church or churches.
9. Require development plans for proposed amenities.


Commercial Facilities:

1. Require reservation of , or plans for convenience item, community shopping center to provide for such goods and service as, groceries, gasoline, sporting goods, drug store, barber and beauty shops, etc; This should be a site of ten acres, more or less, and located on the west side of the lake on a major or arterial street;
2. Plan Commission should consider overall plan for adjoining areas, possibly one to one and one-half miles radius around "Oak Run."

Utilities

1. Require all utilities, where not physically impossible, to be placed underground;

Ecology and Conservation

1. Require installation of central water system as development progresses;
  2. Encourage installation of central sewage systems. If on-site sewage disposal is approved, lot sizes should be a minimum 20,000 square feet, with central water, and adequate soil borings and seepage tests are recommended. (20,000 square feet may not adequate in some areas);
  3. Restrict removal of trees to just those needed to install required improvements and for building sites. It is recommended that a provision be included in the deed restrictions prohibiting indiscriminate removal of trees;
  4. Restrict grading and excavation to that essential for installations of needed and required improvements, (also include in deed restrictions)
  5. Require seeding, or reseeding, of exposed areas to prevent soil erosion and retard siltation of the lake;
  6. Require, in Homes Association rules and regulations, a
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limit on motor power for water craft to prevent erosion of lake shoreline;

7. Require diversion of slurry area run-off water to prevent pollution of lake;

8. Prohibit disposition of solid wastes within the "Oak Run" project;

#### Roads

1. Require increased width of finished surfacing on streets leading to beach and boat launching areas -- recommended is 24 foot width;

2. Allow extension of time on installation of final road improvements with submission of performance;

#### Other Recommendations

1. Require submission of following documents by the developer:

- a) Rules and By-Laws for Lot Owners' Association;
- b) Sewer and water ordinances for sanitary district;
- c) State Certifications on proposed sewer and water system plans
- d) H.U.D. report
- e) Final restrictive covenants.

2. The county should not be made a party to the deed restrictions of the development.

3. Deed restrictions should allow for other type of residential development and provide for uses customarily accessory to residential uses such as, churches, schools, convenience, or neighborhood shopping, public and semi-public uses. This could be accomplished by referring, in the deed restrictions (Restrictive covenants), to a development plan showing other than residential development.